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Snowmobile Races Return To Heber

22 Feb 1989



After a 10-year hiatus, snowmobile racing returned to Heber City Saturday and Sunday, with more than 125 entrants vying to share a \$6,000 purse.

It was only the second race sponsored by the Utah Snowmobile Race Association which was formed last Dec. The first event, held in Syracuse three weeks ago, drew only 58 entries.

Dick Siddoway, president of the association, projected that at the rate enthusiasm is building, he expects more than 200 racers and 15,000 spectators to attend race events in Heber City within four years.

He was president of the Utah Snowmobile Association when races began in Heber City in 1976, which he said drew 30 spectators. During the following four winters attendance grew to 1,700 spectators and some winners took home as much as \$1,200 to \$1,500 in prize money.

Then racing became dormant. But so many people continued to express interest that the new association was organized for racing only, he said.

He reported people came from Idaho, Wyoming and Colorado for last weekend's event. Prizes averaged between \$350 and \$500, but Siddoway is optimistic that it won't take long to build back up to the bigger prizes and crowds of 1979.

Racers reached speeds of 70 to

85 mph on the straightaways, and 45 to 65 mph around the corners on the Wasatch County Fairgrounds track, he said. But the track is designed for horse racing. Winter chariot races and snowmobile events are not compatible, primarily because they require different track conditions, Siddoway explained.

He said his club is already working with the County and the State Department of Parks and Recreation to find a site for a snowmobile track by next winter, with longer straightaways and shorter turns. He said speeds would then reach 90 mph, with 65 mph speeds on the turns. That would increase the competition and be more exciting for spectators, drawing more people to the events, he said.

Ideally, the track should be laid out and molded with manufactured snow and iced, before winter begins, and then groomed back to the ice for events. After the snow melts, there would be no sign that the races had ever taken place, Siddoway said.

Creating the track would be inexpensive, he said, and snow could be piled high along the edge for spectators, so bleachers wouldn't be needed.

He said he plans to hold four events each season, including an annual State Championship race. Eventually he expects enough peo-

ple to attend to fill every motel room within a 60-mile radius, from Utah County to Kamas.

"The snowmobiles running here today average between \$5,000 and \$11,000," he said. They arrived on semi trucks, tractors and trailers. Snowmobiles are 30 mph faster and 50 percent safer than those that raced 10 years ago, he said.

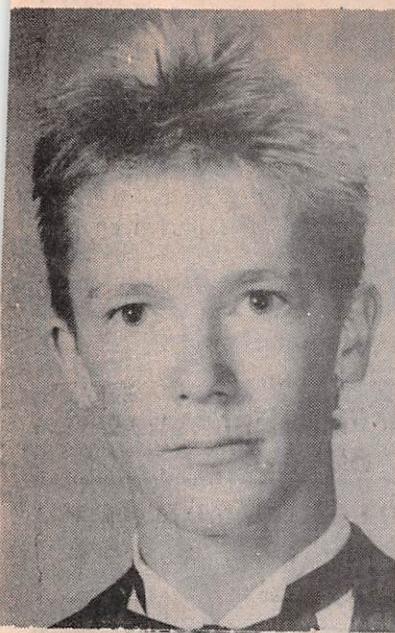
Utah snowmobilers consider Heber City the best site for races, because it is centrally located, snow conditions are right, and there are additional motel rooms in nearby communities when local rooms are full, Siddoway said. "Everything here is a plus in our favor."

As an example of how the sport can grow in Heber City, he reported championship races in Eagle River, Wisconsin, drew 30,000 spectators this year, at \$5 a head, and there were no bleachers. He said races have been held there for 22 years and now fill every motel within 65 miles.

Another reason he believes racing in Heber will succeed is that there is enthusiastic local support, from the County Commission, Chamber of Commerce, individual business owners, and the Parks and Recreation Department, which groomed the track. He said \$1,000 was contributed locally to the prize money. He said he expects Heber City to become Eagle River's western counterpart.

Jeff Knowles Computes as Winner

by Lou Jackson



Jeff Knowles

Jeff Knowles is Wasatch High School's competitor in the area of Math for the Sterling Scholarship. His studies of geometry, algebra, trigonometry, analytic geometry, basic computer programming, business data processing, Pascal computer programming, and Apple graphics would probably be enough evidence to hand him a scholarship right now. The GRA of 3.893 he enjoys would clinch the deal for many scholarship donors, but there is more to this boy than just the

classes he has taken and his grades.

Jeff lives in Heber City with his parents, Jim and Mary. He has also gone to high school in New Mexico, has traveled to Denver and to California, and the variety of traveling and living experiences has given him confidence in himself, and a feeling of being able to handle problems. Jeff is both easy-going and outspoken, cautious and yet friendly, and extremely competitive in the area of computers.

"To be known for computer work" is what he eventually wants to be. He'd like to do some original things in that area. He plans to keep his eyes open and be ready for opportunities as he works toward his goals. "I'll settle down after I've reached some of my goals," he says. But settling down now is almost impossible.

Besides math, computers, and classwork, there are achievements in acapella choir and school musicals; spelling bees and science competitions; piano festivals and Elks competitions. Community service and involvement have included photography, sports, Boy Scouts activities, church leadership, and working at various jobs serving the public.

Competition in math has been fun for Jeff. He has participated in

State math competition at BYU in 1988, at Fort Lewis in 1986 and 1987, at San Juan Region in 1985-86, and won first place at Fort Lewis computer programming competition. This young man has also been a participant in the Honors section the Academic Decathlon and has been a "Top 5 Math Student" for 1985, 1986, 1987, and a "Top 5 Science Student" recipient for the same years.

His attitude and spirit make him the best math recipient choice for Wasatch, and he represents his school with excellent qualifications. Jeff plus opportunity equals success.

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